

## **SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of the Meeting**

**January 17, 2002**

**2:00 PM**

**Room 433, Blatt Building**

**Members Present:** Mr. Staton, Mr. Martin, Mr. Barnet, Mr. Daniel, Dr. Everson, Senator Fair, Senator Giese, Dr. Gummerson, Representative Harrell, Mrs. Marlowe, Mr. McTeer, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Tenenbaum, Representative Townsend, Mr. Wilson

#### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Mr. Staton welcomed members and guests to the meeting. He acknowledged the many contributions of Mr. Barnet during his tenure as chairman.

#### **II. Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes of the December 20<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as distributed.

#### **III. Special Presentations**

A. Class Size Reduction Study: Cathi Snyder, State Department of Education, presented the findings from a review of the literature and a retrospective study of performance in nine districts implementing the class size reduction measures. Mrs. Snyder indicated that the positive impact of class size reductions was strongest in grades K-2, particularly for those students in small (fifteen or fewer students) classes. The impact was lessened if students were only in small classes in grade two. She provided information to document the widespread implementation of small classes for students participating in the free-reduced price lunch program as well as for other groups of students. Members discussed the report with Mrs. Snyder.

B. "Staying the Course": Dr. Jim Watts, Vice President for State Services, Southern Regional Education Board, addressed the EOC. He outlined the Benchmarks study conducted annually by SREB and SC's progress over the last twenty years. He indicated that patterns of consistent attention to student achievement over time are yielding dramatic results in states such as North Carolina and Texas. He recommended that SC use North Carolina and Georgia for comparison studies, outlining similarities in demographics and economies.

#### **IV. Subcommittee Reports**

A. Academic Standards and Assessments: Mr. Wilson reported on behalf of the Subcommittee. He provided information on the Comment Period for the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Criteria for High Schools. He also outlined the report card review process and some of the issues that had been suggested.

Mr. Wilson presented the recommendations on the PACT-Science assessments and outlined the review process. He moved adoption. Mr. McTeer asked about the availability of national assessments. Mrs. Tenenbaum indicated the SDE would provide information when the agency responded to the recommendations. The motion passed. Mr. Wilson introduced Dr. Leah Bricker who outlined the Project 2061 review procedures used with the third and eighth grade assessments. Mr. Staton acknowledged the contributions of BellSouth to the process.

B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms: Mr. Staton drew members' attention to the comparison of the EOC budget recommendations to the Governor's recommendations included in the meeting packet.

- C. Parental Involvement: There was no report.
- D. Public Awareness: Mr. Smith reported on behalf of the Subcommittee. He reviewed the media analysis of coverage during the week the report card was published. He also provided the final report on the survey of leaders. The report is to be distributed to a broad audience, including media during the next week.
- E. Staff and Administration: Mr. Barnet indicated the Subcommittee did not have a report. Mr. Staton referred the long-range plan back to the Subcommittee to explore the comments and next steps. Dr. Anderson drew members' attention to the report on study of school profile information in the meeting packet.

V. **Report from a Key Constituency**

Mr. Staton introduced Dr. Kenneth Gardner, Superintendent for Williamsburg County Schools. Dr. Gardner reviewed the district's efforts to improve student achievement. He introduced Mrs. Janice Gamble, Principal of CE Murray High School. She detailed the structured approach to curriculum implementation, professional development and assessment used in the schools. She explained ways in which the district is committed to achieving at high levels. Dr. Gardner reviewed the ratings of schools in the district. He responded to questions from EOC members. Mr. Staton expressed the appreciation of EOC members to Dr. Gardner and Mrs. Gamble for their presentation and their work in the public schools.

The EOC adjourned at 4:05 p.m.